
The MCA Advisory

The Newsletter of Medal Collectors of America

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**January 12, 2008, membership meeting at
the New York International Show**

What's New on Our Website!

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE EVERY MONTH

www.medalcollectors.org

From the Editor

Our meeting in Milwaukee last month combined with a vibrant website and your strong support for the Advisory confirms that your club is on solid footing. That said, the logical question is “where next?” Under the leadership of John Sallay, your Board has been conferencing on this question. A plethora of ideas has been proposed and, before long, we will come back with a short list to test your enthusiasm.

A silver *Libertas Americana* sold for \$149,000 at a West Coast auction and was promptly re-offered at \$175,000. These prices may have been helped by the pending release of Dave Bowers’ new book: “The 100 Greatest Medals and Tokens”. Per the reports of some, the *Libertas* ranks at or near the top of the book’s ratings.

Also as noted by Wayne Homren and Chris Eimer in the September 9th issue of the *E-Sylum*, the *Libertas* is the most “common” of our early historical medals; thus, its availability makes it worthwhile for dealers to promote. The Washington Before Boston medal, arguably as important as the *Libertas* from an historical standpoint and much rarer, would fetch only a fraction of \$149,000.

Also up there in the ether is George Washington’s Cincinnati badge the property of the Marquis de Lafayette and his family since 1824. Can’t beat the provenance! This admittedly fabulous piece is estimated by Sotheby’s at \$4 million to \$10 million (!). From a historical standpoint, it is well worth the money but, as a unique item that only comes on the market every 224 years, it is unlikely to meet such grandiose expectations. We will know for sure come December 11th when the badge is placed on the block.

Book Review

(by David T. Alexander)

Comitia Americana— Breakthrough in Medallic Research and Publication

The release of *Comitia Americana and Related Medals – Underappreciated Monuments to our Heritage* is a major milestone in American medallic research and publication. At first glance the reviewer might burst out, “John Adams has done it again!” Such an enthusiastic response might well be correct but might devalue the critically important input of co-author Anne E. Bentley of the Massachusetts Historical Society (MHS).

John W. Adams of Boston, Massachusetts, has been a pivotal figure not only in the revitalization of medal research but in the arcane world of the varieties of the 1794 United States Large Cents. The matchless, amazingly definitive collection he formed of that classic date was offered as far back as 1982 by Bowers and Ruddy Galleries in a book-format fixed price list that remains a magnificent resource for Large Cent students and collectors.

As significant has been his role in reawakening interest in the collecting and appreciation of historic American numismatic auction catalogues and numismatic literature in general. His two-volume *United States Numismatic Literature* presented an in-depth review of that long neglected field and has remained an invaluable source of otherwise unobtainable information on American auctions conducted since the mid-19th century.

This title also launched Adams’ enormously productive collaboration with fellow bibliophile George Frederick Kolbe, now of Crestline, California, whose creativity has established a new standard for numismatic book, catalogue and incunabula auctions in the United States. Adams and Kolbe must rightly be hailed as the godfathers of numismatic

bibliophily, which has blossomed under their hands since the 1970's.

Driving home this lesson was the 1999 release of *The Indian Peace Medals of George III, or His Majesty's Sometime Allies*, which further interwove numismatic and historical scholarship with the blend of fine laid paper, exquisite printing, original artwork and sumptuous binding that is so immediately apparent today in *Comitia Americana*. This "gold standard" was further perfected in *The Medals Concerning John Law and the Mississippi System*, published in 2005.

The newest title has been enriched by the lifetime of dedication to the appreciation, preservation and study of historical materials that Anne Bentley brings to the table. It has been her unique opportunity to have the historic cased set of these historic medals formerly belonging to George Washington and Daniel Webster under her care at MHS. Bring together these combined riches of experience and you have in your hands the amazing result that is *Comitia Americana*.

Bibliophiles as well as numismatists and general readers will revel in the rich color illustrations that are liberally sprinkled among the new book's 286 pages. The fascinating historical summary at the end of the volume informs us that the book is printed in Philidor Bell on Phoenixmotion Xantur Text made in Germany by Scheufelen, splendidly bound in off-white cloth by Acme Bookbinding of Charlestown, Massachusetts.

Adams and Bentley devote one chapter to each of the 11 medals inscribed *Comitia Americana*, American Congress. To these they very sensibly add the Benjamin Franklin of Philadelphia Medal dated 1777, the 1784 and 1786 Ben. Franklin Natus Boston pieces, the famous 1781 Libertas Americana designed by Franklin and the equally significant Diplomatic Medal of 1791.

The authors open with an in-depth investigation of a question little understood by collectors, the mystery of the missing 350

medal sets that were supposed to be prepared, housed in custom-made wooden cases and distributed among European monarchs, allied military and naval officers and statesmen as well as American colleges as a record of the new Republic's achievement in the Revolutionary War just ended.

The authors tax Thomas Jefferson with the failure to assemble the necessary medals and distribute them, holding this to be a significant failure of Jefferson's years in Paris. They give a full history of the Washington-Webster set in MHS, a tangled tale that includes an all too human look at the somewhat unhappy later generations of Washington's descendants. The great statesman Daniel Webster rescued this cased set from a pawnbroker and it survives with all 11 silver medals as arguably the most historic such set on this side of the globe.

Without wishing to give away the ending of this numismatic mystery story, it must be pointed out that the authors' investigation of sets and partial sets existing in such cities overseas as Paris, Vienna and Saint Petersburg, Russia and in all parts of the United States represents a magnificent example of numismatic sleuthing that has no parallel in American numismatic research.

Their medal-by-medal chronicle opens with the Washington-Siege of Boston Medal, so often referred to in the older literature as "Washington Before Boston." A quick review of the Adams-Bentley treatment of this first medal will give an idea of their methodology pursued for all the following medals.

The authors have found and include in the new book essentially unknown sketches for this medal by Pierre DuSimitiere preserved in the Library Company of Philadelphia. Precise photos of Washington's own gold strike now in the Boston Public Library are joined by the library's White Metal proof and a private collector's shell of a rejected obverse showing the raised exergue line below the truncation. Close-ups clarify the famous error reverse with

Roman numeral date MCCLXXVI, 1276 and the corrected version MDCCLXXVI, 1776.

A Concordance of new Adams numbers with those published earlier by G.A. Mooney, Dr. George Fuld and William S. Baker will go a long way to clarify past errors or infelicities of earlier attempts to chronicle varieties and restrikes including the long obsolete 1963 Fuld work that was inexplicably resurrected in its entirety for inclusion in Part V of the John J. Ford Jr. Collection catalogue by Stack's. This chapter closes with a Census of one gold, 10 silver and 52 bronze originals, the precious metal pieces are listed by locale such as the Boston Public Library, MHS, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna or State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

Equally thorough records were compiled for the rest of military-naval Comitia Americana issues: Horatio Gates, Anthony Wayne, François-Louis Teissèdre de Fleury, John Stewart, John Paul Jones, Henry Lee, Daniel Morgan, William Washington, John Eager Howard and Nathaniel Greene. The same thorough-going method extends to the Franklin medals, Libertas Americana and Diplomatic Medal noted above, making the book the most complete ever published.

An old proverb has it that only God is perfect. Inevitably a few things eluded the authors' otherwise fine net, notably this reviewer's investigation of the rarest of all Comitia Americana Medals, that awarded to Major John Stewart for his bravery and initiative in the storming of Stony Point on the Hudson River in the dark of night against a well entrenched enemy.

This was the only medal in this historic roster that was never restruck by the Paris or Philadelphia Mints, nor was it recreated for "America's First Medals," the pewter concoctions marketed at the time of the American Revolution Bicentennial. The reviewer's research was presented at the 2004 Conference of Coinage of the Americas (COAC) of the American Numismatic Society

(ANS) and included a census rather more extensive than that included in Adams-Bentley. It may be that the delay in publishing papers presented at the 2004 COAC accounts for this singular omission.

It is certain that the act of publishing will, as always, bring to light additional specimens of all the medals included. Inevitably collectors and curators seeing the new book will be suddenly galvanized to contact Adams and Bentley as they should have a couple of years ago when the authors sent out their requests for information.

No library or private collection that has any interest in American numismatic history can afford to be without *Comitia Americana and Related Medals – Underappreciated Monuments to our Heritage*. Copies may be obtained from George Frederick Kolbe, Crestline, California at \$135 each. No greater bargain is likely to appear in 2007.

The Thomason Medallic Bible

Medal Series (By John Sallay)

The Thomason Medallic Bible is a set of sixty medals struck in 1830 that captures the essence of the entire Holy Bible in medallic art. The obverse designs were inspired by the works of well-known Renaissance artists and executed by several different engravers. The reverse of each medal contains a dense text quotation or explanation describing the topic of each medal. The set was produced in Birmingham, England by Sir Edward Thomason, who felt divinely inspired to "promote the glory of God by impressing the Word of God upon gold, silver and other indestructible metals".

In 1970, the Franklin Mint issued a small-format recreation from newly engraved dies, with much simplified text. While the original Thomason medals were struck in gilt copper and white metal with a diameter of 73mm, the Franklin Mint Version medals were

struck in bronze with a diameter of 44mm. They were sold in a custom binder, with a description from Sir Edward Thomason's Memoirs During Half a Century quoted on the inside front cover:

It appeared to me, in 1827, that I might, through God's assistance, become a humble instrument to effect a unique and novel medallic work to further and promote the glory of God, by impressing the Word of God upon gold, silver and other indestructible metals, with emblematical and symbolical designs, and with a short condensed explanation on the reverses of the medals, and thereby be the first author of a Medallic Bible.

In this feeling my heart rejoiced, my soul was willing, but my flesh was weak, and I prayed unto the Lord to give me grace and strength of mind to accomplish so arduous an undertaking.

I first applied myself in reading over the sacred volume of the Bible, the authority of which is received by inspiration from God, and universally admitted. I found, after taking down copious notes, that I should be unable, by the most condensed arrangements, to produce a tolerably continuous, or even contracted, development under less number than sixty of the largest size medals, each being three inches in diameter, the obverses of which to contain the historical devices, and the reverses filled with lettered explanation; and it was also essential for my purpose that the historical pieces should be obtained from the pictures of the Ancient Masters. I did not despair in accomplishing this apparent difficulty in obtaining copies for my artists to work from, because I held at this period the appointment of eight consulships from foreign governments, which gave me facility to procure copies of such pictures from the Continent which I might not conveniently find in England.

Correction on Erie Medal

(by Jack Levine)

Attached are scans of two Ruotolo medals which you might want to run in the next issue of the MCA Advisory.

I think Sam Pennington inaccurately stated my opinion of the large Erie Canal Medal. This is what my data base says about it.

LARGE SIZE ERIE CANAL MEDAL, 1825. 81mm. White Metal Published in England by Edward Thomason. VF/XF. The obverse depicts the seated figures of Pan and Neptune. To the left of Pan is a cornucopia and in the right background is a lighthouse and the sea. Semi-circular legends above: UNION OF ERIE WITH THE ATLANTIC. In the center of the reverse is the arms of the City of New York. To the left, a section of the Canal and in the background is a sailing ship and distant view of the city. Legend around: ERIE CANAL COMMENCED 4 JULY 1817 COMPLETED 20 OCT. 1825.

This medal is almost identical in design to that the Erie Canal medal by Charles Cushing Wright (See HK-1). As the Wright medals were the ones presented to important officials at the New York celebration in 1826, we conclude that this medal was a "knock-off" of the Wright medal. A dynamic display piece.

Ruotolo Medals (courtesy of Jack Levine)



Admiral Vernon Notes (by Spencer Peck)

This is the first mention of Captain Jenkins and his treatment by the Spanish Guarda Costas in the June and July, 1731 issues of Gentleman's Magazine:

Ship News This Month.

The *Rebecca*, Capt. *Jenkins*, was taken in her passage from *Jamaica*, by a *Spanish Guarda Costa*, who put her people to the torture; part of

which was, that they hang'd up the Capt. three times, once with the Cabin-boy at his feet; they took away his Candles and instruments, and detain'd him a whole day. Being then dismiss'd, the Capt. bore away for the *Havana*, which the *Spaniards* perceived stood after her, and declar'd that if he did not immediately go for the *Gulph*, they would set the Ship on fire; to which they were forced to submit, and after many Hardships and Perils arrived in the River *Thames*, June 11. The Capt. has since been at Court and laid his case before his Majesty.

The *Bacchus*, Capt. *Stevens* arrived, about the middle of this Month, at *Bristol* from *Jamaica*, was taken April 27 between the *Havanna* and the *Gulph*, by a *Spanish Guarda Costa*, which fir'd a Gun at her, and she return'd; upon which they hoisted a red Flag, with a Death's head, then the *Bacchus* struck. They plunder'd the Ship, and stript the Capt. and people of their Cloaths, Etc. and threatened them with immediate Death, if they did not discover their Money, and had ropes reeved at the Yard Arm ready.

The *Runlet Sloop*, Capt. *Brin* of *Rhode island*, was taken with the *Bacchus*. They treated her Men barbarously, torturing their Fingers with Gunlock-Skrews, and lighted Matches, to extort a confession where their Money lay; then stript 'em of their Cloaths and plunder'd the Ship.
from: Gentleman's Magazine Vol. 1 June 1731 page 265

Weekly Essas in July, 1731
Instances in the case of Capt. *Jenkins*, the barbarous usage he met with from the *Spaniards*, and their insolence to his Majesty, when they bid him *carry his ear* after they had cut it off to *King George*.

The *French* he observes, and the *Dutch* have both settlements in the *West Indies*, yet they are unmolested, and only the *British* nation is singled out to be plundered and cruelly used.

Capt. *Steven's* case he mentions, as little inferior in the cruel usage of himself and ships

company, to that of Capt. *Jenkins*. See both, p.263

Five Years, says he, are now almost past since Admiral *Hosier* acquainted the *Secretary of State*, that it was in his power effectually to demolish *these nests of Pyrates*, the harbours and towns in the *Spanish Islands* from whence they are fitted out.

Offers it as his opinion, that it would tend as much to the honour and advantage of the nation, to employ a fleet in the *West Indies* for this purpose, as to deprive our merchant ships of their hands, in order to introduce *Don Carlos* into *Italy*.

From: Gentleman's Magazine Vol. 1 July 1731 page 288

The 1796 Castorland Jetons Part II (By Ron Guth)

To be considered an ORIGINAL, the jeton must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Must match the Obverse 1 and Reverse A die descriptions.
2. Will show no trace of the die break at the S of the PARENS on the reverse.

A jeton will be considered a RESTRIKE if it meets any ONE of the following criteria:

1. Will show the die break at the S of PARENS on the reverse if struck from the Obverse I and Reverse A die combination.
2. Struck from any die combination other than Obverse I and Reverse A.

Die Descriptions Obverse Dies

DIE 1. Leaf point under and away from left serif of R in AMERICANA. 1 of date embedded in denticle. DUV fully under bust. Early states of this die were used to strike "original" examples. Later die states are always seen with tiny raised lumps in the field by the leaf point under ER of AMERICANA. Die rust forms

beneath the F and between the NC of FRANCO (this is sometimes difficult to detect, especially on worn specimens).

DIE 2: Similar to Die I. On this die however, the leaf point is very close to, and directly under, the center of the left serif of the R in AMERICANA. The 1 of the date is embedded in a denticle, and DUV is completely under the bust. No period after DUV.

DIE 3: 1 of date centered over and nearly touches denticle; 1 leans right. Recut A in CASTORLAND (the first A was punched slightly to the left). Diagonal die scratches up from right base of N in COLONIA to rim. FRA and NCO widely spaced. DUV completely under bust. Leaf point away from and under left side of left serif of R in AMERICANA. UV in DUV touch. A in COLONIA appears to be below right bust line.

DIE 4: FRA and NCO widely spaced. DUV completely under bust. 1 of date centered over denticle and leans slightly right; the 1 of the date is attached to the denticle by a thin bar. R in AMERICANA considerably higher than E. DUV separated. Top of 6 in date appears double struck and very slightly thicker than usual.

DIE 5: 1 in date leans sharply right and is centered between denticles and completely separated from them. DUV completely under bust. Leaf point under left side of left serif of R in AMERICANA.

DIE 6: 1 of date centered over denticle and separated from it.

DIE 7: DUV extends partially beyond the bust. Leaf point centered under the R in AMERICANA. The leaf directly under the E of AMERICANA is thin and straighter than on any other die (Die 4 and Die 5 are virtually identical, except for this difference).

DIE 8: DUV extends partially beyond the bust. Defect in lower portion of N. Raised mark in field opposite second 0 of COLONIA. Leaf point centered under the R in AMERICANA. The leaf directly under the E in AMERICANA is thick and rounded (compare with Die 4).

DIE 9: Bulged on coin, vertical die

polishing marks; vertical die line to left of C in CASTORLAND. The 1 of the date is separated from the denticle and stands upright. The legend is evenly spaced. The pair of leaves is under the right side of the R in Americana and close to that letter. DUV is completely under the bust. No period after DUV.

DIE 10: Similar to 5 except die break across top of COLO.

Reverse Dies

DIE A: The S in SALVE is low. MAG of MAGNA spaced apart from and higher than NA. The beaver's tail just touches a denticle. The first U of FRUGUM is low and touches the G. EARLY DIE STATES are unbroken and unruled. INTERMEDIATE STATES show die rust at the right pot handle, but no trace of a break at the S of PARENS. LATE STATES show a break at the S of PARENS which, on the very latest striking, eventually extends into the field to form a massive Y-shaped bulge on the coin.

DIE B: Lettering small and very evenly spaced. Early states are perfect. Late die states show faint die scratches down from the M in MAGNA, another to the lower right of the final A in MAGNA, and a third down from the right pot handle.

DIE C: Similar to Die A in that the U and G of FRUGUM touch, but in this case the R is higher than the F. The beaver's tail is free of the denticle.

DIE D: Large letters (the largest of any reverse die). One of the leafs in the cornucopia almost touches the left serif of the last A in MAGNA.

(Check DIE D or E: Late states show a die break from front paw of beaver to D.V. Minute die break from P to A in PARENS).

DIE E: A virtual twin to DIE B except that the left stand of the N in PARENS has a raised spine that extends towards the denticles.

Observed Combinations

Variety 1a

Obverse 1 - Early state.

Reverse A - Early state.

Metals - Copper (reported with a plain edge), silver.

Variety 1b

Obverse 1 - Early state.

Reverse A - Intermediate state

Metals - Copper, silver.

Variety 1c

Obverse 1 - Late state.

Reverse A - Late state.

Metals - Copper, silver.

Variety 2

Obverse 1 - Late state.

Reverse B

Metals - Copper, silver, gold.

Variety 3

Obverse 2

R e v e r s e B

Metals - Bronze.

Variety 4

Obverse 3

Reverse C

Metals - Silver, Bronze.

VARIETY 5

Obverse 4

Reverse C

Metals - Gold-plated bronze and Silver.

VARIETY 6

Obverse 5

R e v e r s e C

Metals - Bronze.

VARIETY 7

Obverse 6

R e v e r s e C

Metals - Bronze.

VARIETY 8

Obverse 7

Reverse D

Metals - Gold.

VARIETY 9

Obverse 8

Reverse D

Metals - Silver, bronze, gold.

VARIETY 10

Obverse 9

R e v e r s e E

Metals - Bronze.

Comments - Struck as early as 1965.

VARIETY 11

Obverse 10

Reverse D

Metals - Silver.

The following is a list of specimens which have been examined by or reported to the author. Sub-varieties exist with differences in planchet weight and thickness, metal, and edge treatment. Varieties have been listed by the metals in which they occur.

IN COPPER:

Variety 1a. Reeded edge. Thin planchet. 195.7 grains. This is a true "original" with no die rust on either side. Bowers called the Garrett specimen "exceedingly rare." This specimen now resides in the Anton collection. It is thick and struck on a coin axis.

Variety 1a. Reeded edge. Thin planchet. 249.2 grains. An exact duplicate of the preceding variety, but on a thick planchet. Taxay called this a high R-7 in 1976 and listed a third in the "Craig" collection.

Variety 1 a. Plain edge. Another true "original". Believed to be unique, the only example known is in the Anton collection

(Extremely Fine and ex-F.C.C. Boyd-Picker). Taxay labels this "a possible trial strike." The edge is rough, and there is no trace of die rust. Struck on a coin axis.

Variety 1b. Reeded edge. This is an "original", with die rust on the reverse but no break at the S in PARENS. Rare; a Gem example is present in the Anton collection which is struck on a medal axis.

Variety 1 b. Plain Edge. As above, this piece has the die rust on the reverse but no die break at the S in PARENS. Rare; Norweb I, Lot 1406 was mis-attributed as an early restrike. The edge is rounded, unlike the squared edges of most of the later restrikes.

Variety 1c. Reeded edge (observed with and without the Cuivre designation). Thin planchet. Restrike from original dies. Rare. Observed weight: 92 grains.

Variety 1 c. Reeded edge. Thick planchet. These are restrikes from the original dies, with the die rust on the right pot handle and die break (and possible bulging) at the S in PARENS. An interesting collection can be formed of this variety, showing the progressive deterioration of the reverse die. Common.

Variety 1 c. Plain edge. Priced as a common variety by Taxay (although none have been observed by this author).

Variety 2. Reeded edge, with the cuivre designation. Thick planchet. Common.

Variety 2. Plain edge. Rare, the only two examples heard of to date are the one listed by Taxay as being in the ANS collection, and a second in the author's collection. The diameter of this sub-variety is smaller than on the reeded edge sub-variety. The edge appears to have been milled, possibly to remove the

edge reeding. The edge stamp was administered subsequent to the milling.

IN SILVER:

Variety 1a. Reeded edge. A true "original", with no die rust on either side. Thick planchet. Anthony Terranova states that these are "ten times rarer than the originals with the die rust on the pot handle."

Variety 1 b. Reeded edge. Considered to be an "original" despite the die rust on the right pot handle. No break at the S in PARENS. Rare, around twenty known.

IN WHITE METAL:

Variety 1c. Plain edge. Believed to be unique; currently represented by a sole example in the Anton collection. Plain edge.

IN GOLD:

Variety 2. Plain edge. Weight range: 302.5-363.8 grains. Bowers calls this variety "very rare". Garrett's purchase date of April 20, 1883 indicates the era in which these dies were used. See Norweb I, Lot 1404.

Variety 8. Plain edge. See 1987 FUN Sale, Lot 4.

Variety 9. See Bowers & Merena "Kosoff" sale, Lot 4136.

Taxay mentions an unverified example of a gold "original" (C296, Variety 1 a) from the Gschwend sale. Because only the obverse was plated, this may well be a restrike.

Vlack notes that a pewter piece turned out to be counterfeit.

Anton has pointed out that thin planchet "originals" exist in silver.

Mike Ringo observed at the 1987 Mid-

Winter ANA Convention that most of the silver "originals" are struck in a "coin" alignment, as opposed to the "medallic" alignment of all of the various restrikes. Further research by the author has resulted in the following axiom: Any Castorland jeton with a "coin" alignment may be considered to be an original. However, it does not follow that any jeton with a "medallic" alignment is a restrike, as the author has observed two originals struck with a "medallic" alignment!

Variety 1c. Reeded edge. 178.8 grains. Priced by Taxay as the most valuable of any Castorland restrike. See Garrett, Lot 1523. Medal axis.

Variety 1c. Plain edge, with the ARGENT designation. Thin planchet. Fairly common.

Variety 2. Reeded edge, with the ARGENT designation. Thick planchet. Fairly common.

Variety 2. Plain edge, with the ARGENT designation. As with one of the copper pieces observed by the author, the diameter is smaller than that of the reeded edge pieces, and the edge appears to have been milled down. The edge stamp was applied subsequent to the milling.

Variety 4. Plain edge, seen with a "1ARGENT" edge marking with a rooster hallmark.

VARIETY 9. Plain edge, with the ARGENT designation. Brilliant finish.

Variety 9. Plain edge, with the FRANCE designation. Matte finish.

Variety 5. Plain edge, seen with a "1ARGENT" edge marking with a rooster hallmark. IN BRASS

Variety 1a. Reeded edge. Thick planchet. 220.7 grains. A true "original" and believed to be unique. It now resides in the Anton collection (formerly from the Garrett collection, Lot 1522).

IN BRONZE

Variety 3. Plain, rounded edge, with the BRONZE designation. These are the only restrikes observed with rounded edges. All other plain edge restrikes in any metal display sharp, squared edges. Common.

Variety 4. Plain edge, with a "BR" edge marking with a rooster hallmark. VARIETY 9. Plain edge, with the BR FRANCE designation. A modern restrike. VARIETY 10. Plain edge, with the BRONZE designation. A modern restrike.

Variety 5. Gold-plated bronze, with a "BR" edge marking with a rooster hallmark.

Variety 6. With a "BR" edge marking with a rooster hallmark. VARIETY 7. With a "BR" edge marking with a rooster hallmark.

LIST OF KNOWN SILVER ORIGINAL CASTORLAND JETONS

This list includes any example which has no die break at the S of PARENS, but which may or may not have die rust at the right pot handle (where the status of the die rust is known it will be designated).

1. Stack's 9/1979, Lot 581 at \$4200. "Choice Uncirculated. 183 grains. Dies aligned 'bookwise.' Prooflike."

2. Breisland - Virgil Brand - Stack's 6/1973, Lot 857 at \$4250. "Uncirculated. Prooflike."

3. Appleton - Stack's 3/1973, Lot 92. About Uncirculated.

4. Bowers & Ruddy Galleries 2/1976, Lot 1033 at \$1050. - Stack's "New York Library Sale" 1982, Lot 2091 at \$2640. - Stack's 10/1983, Lot 352. "Extremely Fine. 230.7 grains."

5. Ed. Frossard's 17th sale - Bowers & Ruddy Galleries 10/1980, Lot 1520. "Extremely Fine, scattered surface marks. 249.2 grains."

6. Pine Tree Rare Coin Auctions 2/1975, Lot 470. Described as "Proof, possibly finest *by* a minute margin."
7. The Scott's/Taxay plate coin. Appears to be Extremely Fine.
8. Wurtzbach specimen (see 1914 ANS Exhibition catalogue).
9. Merkin 1974 .
10. Mid-American Rare Coin Auctions, Inc. "FUN SALE" 1/ 1986 and "GNA SALE" 5/1986 -Boston collector. Extremely Fine.
11. Stack's 11/1974, Lot 347 at \$1900. - Stack's 8/1976, Lot 81 at \$2000. - Stack's 2/1982, Lot 220 at \$950. Very Fine, with a reverse scratch. This is the Vlack plate coin.
12. England (unnamed source) - Heritage 9/1986 - unknown collection. Die rust at the pot handle.
13. England (unnamed source) - Christie's 9/1986, Lot 137 - Anthony Terranova - author's collection. Die rust at the pot handle.
14. A third piece from the same unnamed source in England.
15. Jack Beymer - Ron Guth - Anthony Terranova. Very Fine. No die rust at the pot handle.
16. Henry Garrett - Ron Guth - Anthony Terranova. Barely Very Fine.
17. New Netherlands Coin Company, February 16,1953 - Norweb I, lot 1403 - Jon Hanson (presumably as agent for D.P.). Die rust at pot handle.
18. F.C.C. Boyd - Richard Picker - Anton. 231 grains. Medal axis!
19. Lester Merkin in 1972 - Anton. Gem. Medal axis!
20. J.W.H. Miner (Granby, Quebec) - Merkin 12/3/1975 at \$1,000. - Anton. Gem Prooflike, with die rust. Medal axis (160° rotation).

[This list is 20 years old. A more modern census needs to be done—ed.]

CREDITS

Several individuals have supplied vital information for this study. I would like to thank William Anton, who has a superb collection of Castorland Jetons and has always been more than willing to share his information. I purchased my first Castorland Jeton from Mike Ringo (it was a thin 1-A restrike in copper) and he was the one who first pointed out the importance of die alignment in classifying original and restrike examples, respectively. Robert Vlack provided valuable input and several of the pieces which were used as the basis for the die studies in this article. I would also like to thank John J. Ford, Jr. for his assistance and knowledgeable guidance. Tom Mulvaney is responsible for ALL¹ of the superb photographs. Victor Gadoury, renowned expert on French coinage, supplied the information on the hallmarks and the periods in which they were used. Gary Trudgen directed me to Edith Pilcher's book. Anthony Terranova taught me an invaluable lesson in humility one day. We are never quite as smart as we would like to think, and keeping an open mind will allow us to recognize important opportunities! My thanks to all!

Letters to the Editor

Dear John,

I recently acquired an NA-3 John Paul Jones Comitia Americana medal with rim flaws more significant than those seen in the Clain-Stefanellis example. I have attached scans so you can see the interesting features of the meda.

To my thinking, this appears to be an original Paris strike, and at an early die state. It

¹ We have asked the author for these photographs and, when received, will do an offprint of the entire article.

has Dupre' on the truncation of the bust and in exergue; it has the crescent moon and clouds in the fields behind the ships; it exhibits a number of the die characteristics of the originals. Specifically, there is rust above the hair ribbon; rust in the A of PAVLO; a rust spot below the V in HOSTIVM; and a connection between IB on NAVIBVS.

My guess is that there was a collar that severely failed, but could it have failed significantly so that the medal design itself did not have sufficient pressure to strike-up in the designs near the edge? Note that the large cuds are not flat, but have a uniform beveled impression. Do we know if the dies suffered any severe damage, and were repaired? Could you even repair a die break of this size cud? Again, it is interesting from the rust spots that this also appears to be an early strike or die state.

I thought I would share this with you. If you wish to include it in the MCA Advisory, you are welcome to do so.

Regards,

Tony

[We include the photos because of the spectacular nature of the rim damage, but believe the dies to be those made by the U.S. Mint—ed.]



Mid-Atlantic



- 1) Drapery touches and extends below upper exergual line
- 2) Upper exergual line is indistinct and rounded
- 3) Drapery crosses right leg at mid-calf
- 4) "sword-like" feature extends to left of clothing

Mass. Hist. Society



- 1) There is a gap between drapery and upper exergual line
- 2) Upper exergual line detailed and moulded
- 3) Drapery crosses right leg at upper calf
- 4) There is no "sword-like" feature

We asked Tony Lopez if he could discern GATTEAU on the reverse of the bronze specimen of the Stewart medal pictured in Comitia Americana. Here is what we got:

[The owner of the bronze Stewart believes the piece to be an early striking to test pressure. However, judging from the scans, Mr. Lopez may have discovered a new reverse die or, at a minimum, an unreported die state—ed.]

Hello John,

The simple answer to your question is that yes, when I enlarged the medal and zoomed in, there are traces of portions of the top of the letters of GATTEAUX on the bronze Stewart medal, though barely discernable.

Of course, there is no such thing as a simple answer!

In order to live up to my claims as the detail man, I have attached two detailed scans, comparing portions of the obverse of the Mid-Atlantic bronze medal with the obverse of the Massachusetts Historical Society obverse cliché, and portions of the reverse of the bronze medal with the reverse of the silver Kunsthistorisches Vienna medal. The sections taken from the bronze medal are marked “Mid-Atlantic”, though it is easy to tell which is which due to the different compositions.

I could spend all day adding dozens of my usual arrows comparing specific details, but they would just clutter the pictures, and also the obvious conclusion from these comparative scans. While your bronze medal exhibits some wear, and the scans were zoomed from smaller originals, these two factors do not account for the multitude of differences seen in the die details and positioning when comparing the bronze medal with the Vienna medal and MHS cliché which were struck with original dies.

Regards,

Tony Lopez



MEDAL COLLECTORS OF AMERICA (MCA)



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MCA's journal is *The Medal Collectors Advisory* which is issued on a monthly basis. It contains club news and articles of interest to all members, some of which are off-printed into a stand alone format. Contributors include some of the best known medal collectors in the country. Most of the information they provide has never been published before.

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